REMARKS

By this amendment, the specification has been editorially amended and claims 1, 3, 10, 11, 13-16, 18 and 26-28 have been amended and new claim 29 has been added in the application. Currently, claims 1-29 are pending in the application.

The indication that claims 6, 9, 21 and 23 contain allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. By this amendment, new independent claim 29 has been added to include substantially all of the subject matter of original claims 1 and 5 and allowable claim 6. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new independent claim 29 is allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner stated that the phrase "said card controller gives priority to setting of the switching part close to either of said recording medium or said information processing device" was unclear. By this amendment, the phrase "said card controller gives priority to setting of the switching part close to either of said recording medium or said information processing device" in claim 10 has been amended to recite "said card controller gives priority to setting of the switching part closer

to either of said recording medium or said information processing device than other switching parts". Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-5, 8, 11-13, 15-20, 24-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Minami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2003/0163620). Also, claims 14 and 27 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Minami et al. in view of Okamoto (U.S. patent No. 6,993,690). Also, claims 7 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Minami et al. in view of Nakai et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2006/0069925).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to claims 1 and 16 and the remarks below.

The present invention relates to a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium capable of performing a plurality of operations and relates to a recording medium access method (see page 1, paragraph [0001] of the specification).

In Fig. 1, a semiconductor memory card 101 is a recording medium in the present embodiment. The semiconductor memory card 101 is configured to include an authentication area 104, a first area 105, a second area 106 and an area selection part 107 (see page 13, lines 5-9 of the specification).

A host 103 is an information processing device that uses the semiconductor memory card 101. The host 103 has a host controller 111 (see page 13, line 24 - page 14, line 1 of the specification).

An adapter 102 is configured to include a card controller 108, a determination part 109 and an area switching part 110. On the basis of a determination result of the determination part 109, the card controller 108 switches between the areas in the semiconductor memory card 101 and relays signals of the host 103 and semiconductor memory card 101. The determination part 109 detects the state of the area switching part 110 at initialization and determines whether or not the area in the semiconductor memory card 101 needs to be switched. The area switching part 110 is a switch for performing an operation of switching the area to be used in the semiconductor memory card 101.

In Fig. 1, the area switching part 110 is set at the side of A, which shows the state where the first area 105 in the semiconductor memory card 101 is selected. In Fig. 2, the area switching part 110 is set at the side of B, which shows the state where the second area 106 in the semiconductor memory card 101 is selected (see page 14, lines 6-25 of the specification).

By this amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite "a recording medium access device for accessing a

recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching part that can be operated from an outside; and a card controller for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from said switching part".

Also, independent claim 16 has been amended to recite "a recording medium access method in a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching step of detecting an input operation from an outside; and a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated". These features are not shown or suggested by these features are not shown or suggested by Minami et al., Okamoto and Nakai et al.

Minami et al. relate to an interface card for a medium (a small storage medium) which is inserted into a slot of an information processing device while holding the medium therein so as to allow for data transmission between the medium and the information processing device, which may be a personal computer or other processing device (see page 1, paragraph [0002]).

Minami et al. disclose that as shown in Fig. 2, an interface card 10 and the information processing device 12 are connected to each other via host connectors 44 (44a, 44b), and the interface card 10 and the medium 14 are connected to each other via medium connectors 50 (50a, 50b) (see page 3, paragraph [0035]).

Minami et al. also disclose that the interface card 10 includes a data transmission mode switching device which allows the user to select from various data transmission modes. The data transmission mode switching device may include, for example, a mechanical switch 42 (see page 4, paragraph [0042]).

Minami et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching part that can be operated from an outside; and a card controller for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from the switching part as claimed in independent claim 1.

Minami et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access method in a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command,

comprising: a switching step of detecting an input operation from an outside; and a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated as claimed in independent claim 16.

Applicants respectfully submit that the recording media of Minami et al. do not have a plurality of areas and an area selecting part as claimed in the present invention.

The present invention discloses that the recording medium has several areas and the area selecting part for selecting one of the areas.

Also, the interface card of Minami et al. does not send a command to switch one area from a using status to another on the media.

For these reasons, it is believed that Minami et al. do not show or suggest the presently claimed features of the present invention. Applicant also submits that Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not make up for the deficiencies in Minami et al.

Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching part that can be operated from an outside; and a card controller

for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from the switching part as claimed in independent claim 1.

Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access method in a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching step of detecting an input operation from an outside; and a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated as claimed in independent claim 16.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that Minami et al., Okamoto and Nakai et al., individually or in combination, do not teach, disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine these references to render the present claims obvious.

In view of the foregoing claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and an action to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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